



NEVER *the* SAME

SERMON SERIES

OVERVIEW: When we meet Jesus face to face, life is never the same. This is the consistent message story after story of individuals who were forever changed because of meeting Jesus. Drawing from Dr. Tim Keller's book, Encounters with Jesus, during this Easter season we will explore some of these individual's stories and see how their encounters with Jesus were uniquely different—but that they all held one thing in common: they were Never the Same.

Week 1 • Meeting Jesus in Tragedy

With the gruesome death of Jesus, Mary Magdalene finds herself at a loss for words coping with this tragedy. With nowhere to turn, she unknowingly encounters Jesus who turns her suffering into joy, despair into hope and darkness into his marvelous light. *Isaiah 61:1–3 (NIV); John 20:11–18 (NIV)*

Week 2 • Meeting Jesus in Our Doubt

The disciples were the lucky ones. They saw Jesus face to face there in the locked upper room after the resurrection. But not Thomas. Even though the others tried to convince him that Jesus was alive, he still doubted. It took a face to face with the risen Jesus to change him forever, and make him the first to proclaim, "My Lord and my God!" *John 20:19–31 (NRSV)*

Week 3 • Meeting Jesus in Our Guilt

When we face death squarely in the face, we encounter Jesus as the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.

As Mary and Martha grieved the loss of their brother, Lazarus, Jesus meets them in their grief with the powerful promise, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, though they die, yet shall they live." Do you believe this? *Hebrews 10:19–23 (NIV); John 21:15–19 (NIV)*

Week 4 • Meeting Jesus in Grief

Is there anyone with a greater burden of guilt than Peter? After denying him three times before the rooster crows, he must encounter Jesus shortly after the resurrection. Will there be retribution by Jesus? Will Peter be forever cut off from his forgiveness? Will this burden of guilt ever be forgiven? What happens when we meet Jesus in our guilt? *John 11:17–44 (NRSV)*

Week 5 • Meeting Jesus in Crossroads

Nicodemus found himself at a crossroad. The one path kept him on his elite status as a respected leader of the Jewish community. The other path would forever change his life. As Nicodemus meets Jesus at this crossroad, the decision as to which path to follow was a struggle, but one he knew he must choose. *Hebrews 3:7–14 (NLT), John 3:1–21 (NIV)*

Week 6 • Meeting Jesus in Our Skepticism

Nathanael doubted that anything good could come out of Nazareth. He wasn't alone. No prophecies mentioned it. No kings came from it. Nothing good came out of Nazareth, until his skepticism encountered Jesus and his life would forever be changed. *John 1:43–51 (NIV); Psalm 46 (NIV)*

